CM202.01: Digital Tools

Course Information

3 credit hours, a required course for communication majors and minors.

Class Time: T, TH: 9:25 - 10:40 a.m. at College Center M021
Instructor: Mas Biswas, Ph.D. | Email Biswas: mkbiswas@loyola.edu | Phone: 410.617.6753 | Skype: mas.biswas
Instructor's Office: College Center M026A
Instructor's Office Hours: 11am - noon, 4:30 - 5:30pm (Tuesdays), 11am - 1pm (Thursdays) and by appointment.

Course Description

Through a combination of lectures, on-site lab practica with applied projects, and online training resources, students will attain working knowledge of fundamental digital media production skills required for advanced study in communication. In this hybrid course[1], students will learn the basic tenets of online applications, including cloud storage and file management; publication/graphic and web design; web content management; and, audio and video capture, editing and publishing.

Learning Outcomes

- To learn basic techniques of graphic design applications;
- To understand how content management system works (such as WordPress);
- To gain skills on how to create and prepare/edit audio-visual documents;
- To understand the process of file management through cloud-based services;
- To gain knowledge of digital file formats and publishing platforms.

Course Materials

No textbook is required for this course. All the reading materials and tutorials will be posted on Moodle. You can access your course Moodle page via **(**http://moodle.loyola.edu**)** and also, if you wish, you can install Moodle app on your smartphone.

Software:

Adobe Creative/Graphic Design Software: Though all of our lab computers have Adobe software installed on them, given the hybrid nature of this course, it is important that you also have access to up-to-date version of these software on your personal computers via Adobe

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[1] In hybrid class structure, some classes (less than 50% of total classes in this course) will be online. In most cases, you will utilize online class hours to work on software learning activities following tutorials.

Creative Cloud. When you download them from Adobe Creative Cloud, you usually download their most-latest version):

- Adobe Bridge CC
- Adobe InDesign CC
- Adobe Photoshop CC
- Adobe Illustrator CC

Downloading Adobe software through creative cloud is free for Loyola Students. Please apply for your Creative Cloud license through this link (http://www.loyola.edu/department/technology-services/services/software/adobe-creative-cloud).


WordPress: You will use the most popular Content Management System (CMS) – WordPress – to learn creating a website as well as online portfolio in this course. Communication Department will secure the site space and WordPress for you. You do not need to buy any tool or service for this. In appropriate time of the semester, the Instructor will inform you how to access your WordPress account.
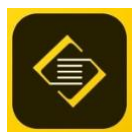
Adobe Spark: In addition to WordPress, you will learn the use of this app/tool – Adobe Spark Page -- to create webpages. Adobe Spark Page is a free, web-based software. You do not need to install it on your computer. You will just need to use your Adobe username (which will be your university email address) and password for Adobe to access the Adobe Spark Page (https://spark.adobe.com/about/page). You can install Adobe Spark Page app on your smartphones and/or iPads/tablets.
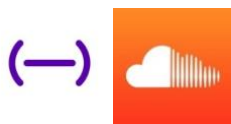
SoundTrap & SoundCloud: For learning basics of audio recording and editing, we will use SoundTrap app/software. You can create an account for free plan on SoundTrap's website (https://www.soundtrap.com/). You will be expected to install SoundTrap app on your smartphone. Also, please create an account on SoundCloud.Com where you will publish your audio work.
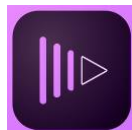
Adobe Premiere Clip: For learning the basics of video recording and editing on smartphones and/or iPads/tablets, we will use Adobe Premiere Clip app (available in App Market and Google Play).

In addition to above software and tools/apps, make sure that your computer has Adobe Acrobat Reader or Adobe Acrobat Pro and Microsoft Word installed on it.

Accounts & Supplies:

You will need to have accounts with following services:

- Adobe (you can use Loyola's email address)
- Gmail address and YouTube Account (you can sign in YouTube with Gmail address since they are both Google's products/services.)
- SoundTrap.Com
- SoundCloud.Com

A dedicated portable USB storage device [minimum 16GB is preferred]. Also, you are expected to back up/store your class activities and assignments, both draft and final version, in multiple locations, including cloud services such as OneDrive, Google Drive or Dropbox. Therefore, excuses such as losing files and having corrupt files because of computer issues may not be accepted/considered as valid excuses.

Grading & Course Requirements

Grades are based on standardized criteria. Grade reports will be issued periodically. The reports show progress toward learning aims, attendance/class participation, and a prediction of the overall course grade, which might change, as additional grades are included. The purpose of the grade reports is to maintain accurate records. *Students are responsible for immediately notifying the course instructor of apparent recording errors. Students experiencing difficulties should request help from the course instructor.*

Final Grading Scale(%):

A   93 – 100
A-   90 – 92.9
B+   87 – 89.9
B   83 – 86.9
B-   80 – 82.9
C+   77 – 79.9
C   73 – 76.9
C-   70 – 72.9
D+   67 – 69.9
D   60 – 66.9
F   0 – 59.9

Course Assessment Methods:

- Module-specific tutorial activities and module assignments
- Exams (Exam I on Reading for Modules 1 – 2, Exam II on Readings for Modules 3 – 5)
- Portfolio Site on WordPress
- Final Project (Digital storytelling with Adobe Spark Page)

Course Grade Distribution:

50% - Completion of reading, module tutorials activities and/or assignments (modules 1-5, includes tutorials and major activity/assignment completion for each module, 5 X 10%; work load may vary depending on the nature of a module.). Since module 6 on embedded media will be the shortest module, module 6 is not included in this grading category.
20% - Exams (2 X 10%)
10% - Final Project in Adobe Spark
10% - Final Portfolio on WordPress (incorporates projects from modules)
10% - Attendance, Punctuality and active Participation (including efficiency on "online classwork" days)

Late Work Policy: Late assignments will not be accepted more than a day after the deadline and will receive a letter grade penalty for late submission. A missed exam can be made up if you can offer an evidence for a valid/acceptable excuse (please read "Class Policies" section for excused absences). *No extension will be granted for midterm, final project and final portfolio.*

Class Policies

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to come to every class session unless it is a project day or an online class session. You may want to print out the course schedule for your convenience. The success of many aspects of class, such as discussion, peer critiques, and class activities, will depend on attendance. Attendance is recorded at the beginning of each class session.

Students who choose not to attend will be penalized for excessive absences, as follows:
- 1 or 2 unexcused absences = No effect on the final course grade
- More than 2 unexcused absences = Minus one letter grade for each absence

Grade Reduction Examples. A student earning an overall "B+" on all the assigned work and having four unexcused absences will receive a penalty of two grades (4 unexcused absences minus 2 allowed) or a Final Class Grade of "B-." Another student earning a "C+" and having six unexcused absences will receive a penalty of 4 letter grades (6 unexcused absences minus 2 allowed) or a Final Class Grade of "F."

If, for reasons of health or other emergency, a student knows that he/she will be absent from class for several days, the student should inform the Academic Advising and Support Center (AASC) by telephone (410) 617-5050 or respective Class Dean. The AASC will, in turn, notify the student's instructors. *Only instructors can excuse absences.*

Definition of an Excused Absence: Excused absences are identified by the course instructor. Such excused absences include health problems, family and personal emergencies, absence from campus on official University activities such as athletic competition or academic field trips. In some of these cases, students will be expected to provide appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's note).

Excused Absence for University-approved activity: The student is responsible for personally informing the course instructor of such University-approved activities and must not expect other persons to convey such information to the course instructor. Therefore, absences for official

university activities will not be excused unless the student personally informs the course instructor about them.

Class Policy on Absences: If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate and to makeup missed assignments; exams cannot be made-up following an unexcused absence. Exceptions are intended to accommodate illness, emergencies, religious holidays, and university-sponsored trips.

Class Policy on Excessive Absences: If a student's absences, both excused and unexcused, reach what the course instructor considers to be unacceptable proportions, the course instructor reserves the right to make a professional judgment that a student has not satisfactorily completed the course and to record a final grade of "F" for the student.

Student Athletes: Each student athlete is required to provide to the course instructor printouts of documents indicating class absences for athletic events. While absences for mandated athletics events are excused, missed work is not excused and must be made up. When necessary, negotiate deadline extensions with the course instructor.

Learning Disabilities: To request academic accommodations for a disability, contact the Disability Support Services (DDS) Office at (410) 617-2062. It is your responsibility to present letters from the DDS Office indicating your need(s) for accommodation of disabilities to the course instructor within the first two weeks of class. Every effort will be made to provide such accommodations in this course while respecting the student's privacy.

Loyola University Deadline for Course Withdrawals: The Course Calendar gives the university's deadline for withdrawing from a course with a grade of "W." Following this date, students not successfully completing the course will receive a final grade of "F."

Inclement Weather: If the University, due to inclement weather or another event, cancels a class meeting we will follow the University's make-up schedule. Refer to the University's website or phone line to confirm that class has been canceled.

Honor Code: Misrepresenting oneself by cheating on exams or quizzes, failing to cite sources for quotations, paraphrasing, or outside media assets, turning in another person's work, or turning one's own work for another class or university activity is a serious breach of faith with the academic community, as defined by the *Loyola University Honor Code Statement:*

The students of Loyola University Maryland are citizens of an academic community that will conduct Itself according to an academic code of honor, following the Jesuit Ideal of cura personalis and keeping within the school motto, *"Strong Truths Well Lived."*

"The students of this University understand that having collective and individual responsibility for the ethical welfare of their peers exemplifies a commitment to the community. Students who submit materials that are the products of their own minds demonstrate respect for themselves and the community in which they study."

"All outside resources or information should be clearly acknowledged. If there is any doubt or question regarding the use and documentation of outside sources for academic assignments,

your instructor should be consulted. Any violations of the Honor Code will be handled by the Honor Council."

The course instructor is duty bound by membership in the Loyola academic community to report Honor Code infractions to the Honor Council. Honor Code violations confirmed by the Course Director are punishable by a grade of "F" for the test or assignment in the first instance and for the course in the second. For more information about the Loyola Honor Code (http://www.loyola.edu/academic/honorcode).

The Department of Communication Honor Code policy reiterates that the university honor code applies to all CM courses, including this one. The Course Director will follow the Department of Communication's policy guidelines for honor code violations if any infraction of the code occurs. The department's policy is available upon request.

All assignments and projects submitted in this course **must be your own work**. When an image or text is gathered from the Web and another source, proper **APA formatted citations** must accompany the assignment. Use resources on APA style guide (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html) to verify the format.

Appeal of a Grade: The grade appeal policy in the current *Loyola University Undergraduate Catalog* applies. This policy provides adjudication of written student appeals submitted with four months following issue of the grade in question. Appeals go first to the course instructor. Unresolved appeals are reviewed first by the department chair, and then, if still unresolved, to a two-person panel appointed by the department chair for final determination.

Computer Policies

Required Use of Loyola E-mail Account: The course instructor will post information about class events, assignments, grades, and other course matters to the course Moodle site and also, in some cases, by e-mail to class members' Loyola University e-mail accounts or any other email addresses programmed with course Moodle. Students are obliged to check their accounts daily for course-related messages. The course instructor endeavors to protect the privacy of all students. Personal information such as grades & critiques are kept confidential.

Computer Facilities: Students will have access to Apple Macintosh® computers in Department of Communication media laboratories for working on course assignments so long as they abide by laboratory policies and provide for lab security. Use your Loyola ID card to gain access to the lab and to activate printing. This access means you can do homework and print in the lab whenever you want except for during classes (schedule posted). You are expected to follow posted lab rules. If you have questions on software and hardware, call Technical Services at x5555, 410-617-5555. *Note:* Students are not required to use department-provided facilities to fulfill course assignments and may substitute their own resources, which are not necessarily supported by university resources.

Course Schedule

Notes:
1. *Classes listed in the rows with grey background are online classes. We will not meet in classrooms on those days. Instead, you will be expected to utilize class time to work on tutorials and work on assignments/activities. If you wish, you can come to classroom/lab to work on tutorials and assignments.*
2. *For instruction on assignments/activities, exams and midterm in "Syllabus, Assignments & Exams" section of Moodle.*

Date	Topics to be covered	Deadlines
Sept. 4	- Course Overview - Installation of apps & accessing technology resources - Evaluating students' software backgrounds	
Module 1: File management through cloud-based services (2 weeks)		
Sept. 6	- Evolution of web, storage & memory - Overview of different cloud-based services -- OneDrive, Google Drive/Dropbox	
Sept. 11	Working on Adobe Bridge and OneDrive Activities	
Sept. 13	- Review of Cloud-based activities - Adobe Creative Cloud - Pros and cons of cloud-based services	Module 1 tutorial activities are due.
Module 2: Essential Graphic Skills		
Sept. 18	- Design Principles - Image File Formats - Overview of Graphic Design Software	Module 1 assignments are due.
Sept. 20	Tutorial: Creating a simple illustration with Illustrator	
Sept. 25	Reviewing Illustrator Tutorial Activity	Illustrator Activity is due.
Oct. 27	Tutorial: Basic Image Editing & Creation with Photoshop	
Oct. 2	Reviewing Photoshop Tutorial Activity	Photoshop Activity is due.
Oct. 4	Tutorial: Creating Layout with InDesign	

Date	Topics to be Covered	Deadlines
Oct. 9	Typography Reviewing InDesign Tutorial Activity	InDesign Activity is due.
Oct. 11	Project day (Working on Module 2 Assignment).	
Oct. 16	Software/Module Review	Module 2 Assignment is due.
Oct. 18		Exam I
Module 3: Content Management System and Web Design		
Oct. 23	Tutorial: Creating a webpage with Adobe Spark Page	
Oct. 25	• Review of Adobe Spark Page • Discussion on Evolution of Web Design • Essential Web Terms • How web system works	Adobe Spark Activity is due.
Oct. 30	Tutorial: Creating a webpage with WordPress	
Nov. 1	• Review of WordPress • Pros and Cons of CMSs • Web Design Principles	WordPress Activity is due.
Module 4: Audio recording and editing apps		
Nov. 6	• How to record audio • How to do basic audio editing • Overview of how SoundTrap works	
Nov. 8	• SoundTrap Activity • Audio formatting and publishing to website	
Module 5: Video recording and editing apps		
Nov. 13	• Basic Video Concepts/Terms (including file formats, file sizes) • Learning how to capture and edit video with smartphone app Adobe's Premiere Clip.	
Nov. 15	Video Activity with Adobe Premiere Clip	Module 4 & 5 assignment is due by 5 p.m. on Friday, November 16.
Nov. 20		Exam II

Date	Topics to be Covered	Deadlines
	Thanksgiving Break (Nov. 21 – 25)	
Module 6 Embedded Media		
Nov. 27	• Scope and application of embedded media • Learning how to generate Twitter and Facebook widgets inside and outside WordPress (In-class activity)	
Nov. 29	• How to embed multimedia files from SoundCloud, YouTube/Vimeo, Google Map and slideshow (In-class activity)	
Review		
Dec. 4	Review of Portfolio Design and Final Project-related Applications	
Dec. 6	Project Day	
Dec. 18		Final Project and Portfolio are due by 1pm.

Any changes to this schedule will be communicated with the students in class and via email.

August 28, 2018 version.